

JONATHAN COFFIN.

JANUARY 17, 1832.

Read, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Mr. BATES, of Massachusetts, from the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, made the following

REPORT:

*The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to whom was referred the petition of the legal representatives of Tristram Coffin, deceased, report:*

That, in 1779, the Government of the United States chartered of T. Coffin, then in full life, a schooner, the sole property of the said Coffin, called the Vigilant, to go to South Carolina, and there take in a cargo of rice for the army. Owing to the number of the enemy's ships off the coast at the time, the voyage was hazardous, and insurance unattainable in the country. The contract was, that the Government should risk the vessel against the armed ships of the enemy. Under this contract, she proceeded on her voyage to Charleston, and was captured near her port of destination by the armed ships of the enemy, and burnt. The claim is for the damage done to the owner.

The facts upon which the claim is founded, are established to the satisfaction of the committee. It further appears, though not essential to the merits of the question, that, in consequence of the loss of his vessel, Mr. Coffin failed in business; his property was sacrificed, and himself expelled the society of Friends, to which he belonged. The claim has not been permitted to sleep; and, by referring to the books of the Committee of Claims, we find, in 1796, a report thereon, of which, it will be sufficient to give the following extract:

"Tristram Coffin owned a schooner which was in the service of the United States, and, in 1779, the enemy burned her at Charleston, in South Carolina. He has received £155 11s. 1d. for her, whereas she was worth £500. The schooner was appraised at £2,600, in the currency of that State, and that sum was paid to Mr. Coffin. The depreciation seems to be the basis of his claim." The committee of 1796, made an unfavorable report, upon the ground "that if deficiencies are to be made up, the property of the United States would not be sufficient for the demand."

In this case, there seems to be no doubt as to the contract: none as to the loss, and none as to the precise amount of the depreciation, it being the difference between £155 11s. 1d., and £500; and, consequently, none as to the extent of the loss of Mr. Coffin. But the committee, upon a re-examination of the case, concur with the former committee in their result, and recommend the adoption of the following

RESOLUTION, That the prayer of the petition ought not to be granted.

